

Parenting the First Year

Months
4-5

How Baby Is Changing

Your baby is starting to tell people apart, and he knows his mom and dad. He will smile more at real people than at pictures of faces. He also might have favorite toys.

He probably can roll from side to side and might even be able to go from his tummy to his back. Watch out. Your child could roll off a counter or a changing table even if you just turn your back for a second.

Your baby's reaching and grasping skills are improving. Watch when he wants a toy. At first, he had to look from his hand to the toy. As your baby's skills improve, he grabs for it directly without looking at his hand first.

Whatever your baby reaches goes right into his mouth. You'll want to be sure he can reach only things that are clean and safe to chew on. Your baby learns about things like texture, size and weight by putting objects into his mouth. Don't discourage him from doing this.

He may be getting teeth, although most babies begin teething at 6 months. Usually the two lower front teeth are first. Look for teething information on page 4.

Crib Toy Safety Alert

Remove toys that hang across the crib by the time your baby is around 5 months old. When babies can push up on their hands and knees (sometimes at around 5 months), they can fall on the toy and not be able to get off by themselves. This can cause choking.

Hooded sweatshirts and other loose clothing also can be caught on parts of these toys, causing choking. Babies shouldn't wear these kinds of clothes to bed.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has a toll-free number for you to ask questions or report problems with baby products. Call 800.638.CPSC (2772).

Can Baby Obey?

If you believe that your baby is able to listen to you and understand your commands, you are expecting too much. A 4-month-old infant does not understand what you are saying, but she hears your tone of voice and may sense that you are angry or happy.

Research shows that a baby this young is not able to control actions and do what you say.

Being kind and gentle with your baby will help more than anything else. She doesn't do things to bother you on purpose.

Never spank or yell at your baby. Learning right from wrong is a long and slow process. Be patient. Keep your home and play areas safe to prevent problems instead of expecting your baby to know better.



Your Baby Wants You To Know by the End of Five Months

How I Grow

- I turn my head in all directions.
- When I'm on my back, I lift my head forward and grab my feet with my hands.
- I sit up for about 15 minutes with my head and back straight if you support my body.
- I prefer sitting instead of lying down. It's more interesting!
- I roll from my back to my side, but sometimes I get my hand caught under my tummy.
- I put things into my mouth.
- I splash and kick with my hands and feet in the bath.

How I Talk

- I babble and imitate sounds like coughing and clicking my tongue for long periods of time.
- I coo, grin or squeal with joy when you talk to me.

How I Respond

- I love to see myself in the mirror.
- I'm fascinated by my hands.
- I like some people and am shy or scared of others.

How I Understand

- I can remember things for about five seconds.
- I remember important people, like my parents, from night to morning or even longer.
- I know if something is near or far.

How I Feel

- I get excited when I have fun. Everything is a game to me.
- I cry and get mad when you stop paying attention to me or take a toy away.

How You Can Help Me Learn

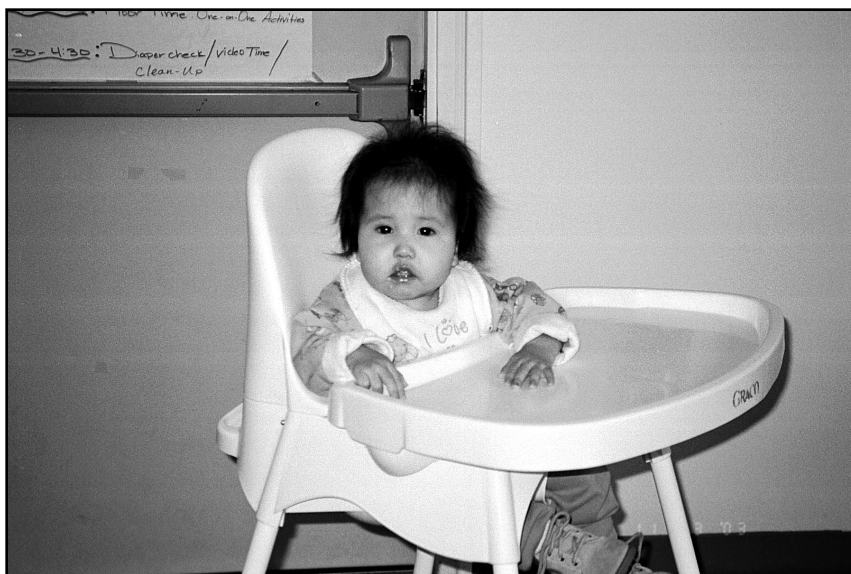
- Put me on my tummy and hold up a toy for me to follow with my eyes. This helps me learn to roll over.
- Give me things to kick, swipe, bat, bang, rub and shake.
- Give me things that cause something to happen, like plastic balls with sounds or beads on a sturdy string.
- Read nursery rhymes to me. I like to listen to your voice.
- Play "This Little Piggy" with my toes or fingers.

He or She, Him or Her

These newsletters give equal time to both sexes. That's why we take turns referring to children as "he" or "she." Keep in mind that we are talking about all children when we use "he" or "she."

REMINDER: Your baby should have a health-care provider visit at 6 months of age.

Children are very different from each other. Don't worry if your child manages some skills earlier or later than other children. Most children tend to focus on one area, like physical or language development, and pay less attention to other areas. Get to know your unique baby and celebrate each new skill with him!



Highchair Safety

Here are some things to look for to be sure the highchair is safe:

- It should be sturdy with a wide base so it won't tip easily.
- There should be a seat belt with a crotch strap to go between the infant's legs to keep her from sliding out.
- The tray should lock securely on both sides with no sharp edges.
- Belt buckles and tray locks should be easy for you to use but not easy for your baby to use.
- The seat should not be slippery. If it is, put rubber bathtub stickers on it so your baby doesn't slide around.

DO's for Using a Highchair

- DO use the seat belt and crotch strap every time.
- DO lock the tray into place.
- DO be sure your baby's fingers are out of the way when you lock the tray.
- DO keep the highchair far enough away from the counter or table when your baby is in it. She could push off the counter or table and tip over.
- DO watch closely when she is in the highchair. Some babies have slipped down between the leg straps and choked.

DON'Ts for Using a Highchair

- DON'T let her stand up in the highchair.
- DON'T let other children play or climb on the highchair.
- DON'T leave baby unattended in a highchair.

Learning Through Touch

Early on, your baby plays with his hands and feet and learns about his body. This is also how he learns about others. He may grab for your hair or pat your face as a way of learning who you are.

Give your baby different textures to feel such as things that are soft, crinkly, smooth or bumpy. Feeling a blanket, a cuddly toy or the bath water helps him learn about other things in the world.

Your baby also learns by *being touched*. From your handling, he senses how you feel. The amount of holding and touching tells him how important touch is. And studies show that babies who are touched more often explore their world more actively.

If you hold your baby only when you have to bathe or change him, you both miss time to be close and to learn.

Touch and hold your baby often. That's how he learns that you're near and that you care. Most of all, he learns "I'm OK."

Give him lots of hugs and kisses, pats, rocking, stroking and massages.

Participate in a local infant massage class or call 800.472.2286 to get additional information about certified infant massage therapists in your area.

Q and A

I think my baby is teething. She's cranky and drools a lot. What can I do to make her more comfortable?

It is quite normal for babies to get some teeth at this age. First teeth usually come in at 6 months, but some babies get them as early as 3 months and others don't get any teeth until they're 1 year or older. Once teething starts, your baby will teethe for months.

As her teeth push through the gums, your baby may feel some soreness and become cranky and irritable. You may notice her gums are swollen where a tooth is about to come in.

Gently rubbing her gums with a clean finger or cool, wet clean cloth can be soothing. Chilling a teething ring in the refrigerator and letting her chew on it may also help. Ask your health-care provider before using a commercial numbing agent.

Your baby may drool a lot and have some diarrhea. If the diarrhea continues, it may be caused by something other than teething.

Don't assume that a fever, vomiting, diarrhea or other signs of illness are caused by teething. If your baby shows any of these signs, have her checked by your health-care provider.

Back is Best

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that healthy infants should be placed on their backs to sleep at nighttime and naptime.

Learning To Talk

Learning to talk has many steps. Every sound your baby makes is another step toward talking. Every child reaches each step on his own time schedule.

Research shows that when parents talk to their babies, it helps the infants learn how to talk and think. You are a role model for him to copy. He needs chances to practice making sounds with you and praise from you for doing it.

Even when you aren't playing, talk to your baby! Keep sentences short and simple.

When you're cooking or cleaning, put him in a safe spot in an infant seat on the floor to watch you. Talk to him about what you're doing. Show him vegetables and talk about their colors and sizes, for example.

Encourage your baby to "talk" by talking to him and pausing to give him a chance to answer. Even if he smiles or waves his arms instead of making a sound, he is learning.

At this age, your baby makes mostly vowel sounds like ah, ay, oo and oh. He probably says them over and over as if practicing. Soon he will make other sounds, too.

What About Baby Talk?

Some kinds of baby talk *are* useful. Repeating words (choo choo), ending words with an "ee" sound (doggie) or using words with syllables (Mommy, Daddy) will help your baby learn to talk. This gives her extra chances to hear the sounds. Try saying "dog" out loud. Now say "doggie." Isn't it much easier to hear the "g"?

Researchers have found that people all over the world use baby talk when speaking to their babies. The high-pitched voice and unique words are common. However, baby talk such as "isn't oo mama's precious uzzums" doesn't help your baby learn to talk because it's hard to understand and some of the words don't mean anything.

Twins or Triplets at Your House?










Twins or triplets are a joyful addition to any family but also hard work.

- Get help! Let friends and relatives help with housework, go shopping, bring in a meal, do something special for your other children, care for the babies while you sleep, bottle feed or hold one infant while the other is breast-feeding.
- If you have a partner, share the workload and coordinate duties. Talk about feelings, and plan regular moments together without the babies.
- Get rest. The more rest you get, the better you can care for the babies.
- Organize your house, and make a schedule. List the things you do at somewhat regular times each day and post it.
- To avoid being worn out by people who are fascinated with twins, don't feel you have to stop and answer questions; just smile and keep moving.

Giving Your Baby Medicines

Talk to your doctor before you give her any medicine. Here are some tips to follow when you give any medicine to your baby.

- **Never give aspirin to a baby. See acetaminophen dosage guide.**
- Always give medicines according to the health-care provider directions (correct dosage and frequency).
- Do exactly what the label says to do unless your health-care provider directs you otherwise.
- Always keep medicines out of reach of children.
- Keep medicine lids closed tightly.
- Give all of the prescription medicine even if she gets better (unless the health-care provider says otherwise).

Acetaminophen Dosage Guide				
Dose of Acetaminophen* to be given every 4-6 hours				
< 12 pounds	12-17 pounds	18-23 pounds	24-35 pounds	36-47 pounds
1/2 dropper of drops 	1 dropper of drops  or 1/2 teaspoon of elixir (syrup) 	1 + 1/2 droppers of drops  or 3/4 teaspoon of elixir (syrup) 	1 teaspoon of elixir (syrup)  or 2 chewable tablets 	1 + 1/2 teaspoons of elixir (syrup)  or 3 chewable tablets 
*Examples of Acetaminophen are Tylenol, Panadol, Tempra and Liquiprin. Do not give aspirin.				

Think Twice About Baby Walkers

Baby walkers have had so many safety problems and no clear benefit from their use that some officials, including the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends a ban on the manufacture and sale of mobile infant walkers.

Most of the injuries to babies are caused by the following:

- Babies in walkers can fall down stairs or tip over when crossing uneven surfaces.
- Babies in walkers are mobile and are able to reach products that may be poisonous or could burn or fall on them.

An alternative to using a mobile walker would be a stationary activity center. In a stationary activity center, your child will be protected from most injuries associated with mobile baby walkers.

If you do decide to use a mobile walker:

- Close doors to stairways and latch safety gates.
- Keep a close eye on your baby, especially when other children are nearby.
- Remove dangling appliance cords.
- Never leave your baby alone in a walker— constant supervision is a must!
- Remove dangerous things from his reach.
- Use it for fewer than two hours a day.
- Use a walker only on smooth surfaces.
- Keep baby away from swimming pools, toilets and other sources of water.

Moving to a Big Bathtub

If you've been using the kitchen sink or a special tub for baths, your baby may be starting to outgrow it.

Here are a few things you can try to make the move to a big bathtub easier for you and your baby:

- **Never leave your baby alone in a bathtub, even for a minute.** If the phone rings, wrap him in a towel and take him along, or just let it ring.
- Check the water temperature before placing him in the bathtub. Run cold water first, then add hot water to reach a safe temperature (no higher than 104 degrees F). Test by moving your hand through the water. If it feels hot, it is too hot for him.
- Face your baby away from faucets and close to the other end of the tub to avoid possible burns from hot water.
- If you use a baby tub, try putting it inside the bathtub and bathing your baby in it for a few days.
- Bathe your baby slowly and gently until he gets used to it.
- Don't bathe him under running water.
- Try using a bath ring to help him sit up, but do not leave him alone.

Having your baby in a big tub can be hard on your back.

1. Bend from your *knees*, not from your hips. Use your stronger leg muscles to help when you lift your baby.
2. Hold heavy objects, like your baby, close to your body.
3. Don't lift and twist at the same time. Lift, then turn.

Lead in Water

Too much lead in the human body can cause serious damage to the brain, kidneys and nervous system. Young children and fetuses are at more risk of lead poisoning even with short-term exposure.

Lead levels in your drinking water are likely to be highest if:

- Your home has faucets or fittings of brass.
- Your home or water system has lead pipes.
- Your home has copper pipes with lead solder.

To reduce the lead in drinking water, do the following:

- Anytime the water in a particular faucet has not been used for six hours or longer, “flush” your cold water pipes by running the water for two or more minutes.
- Use only water from the cold-water tap for drinking, cooking and especially for making baby formula. Hot water is likely to contain higher levels of lead.

The only way to be sure of the amount of lead in your household water is to have it tested. For more information about water testing, call the North Dakota Department of Health, Division of Chemistry at 701.328.6142.

Is Your Baby Ready for Solid Foods?

Does your baby sit well in a highchair? Hold his head up without wobbling? Put things into his mouth and chew on them? These are some signs that he is ready to start eating solid foods.

Don’t be in a hurry to start solid foods. Doctors and dietitians recommend starting solids around 5 to 6 months of age. If you and your health-care provider decide your baby is ready, keep the following points in mind.

- **Many doctors recommend starting with rice cereal.** It is fortified with iron and not likely to cause food allergies. Mix a tablespoon of cereal with breast milk or formula until the mixture is smooth and about as thick as cream.
- **Pick a time when your baby is hungry but not starving.** It may help to start with some breast milk or formula, then try cereal and finish with more milk. Even if he has a big appetite, start with only a few tablespoons a day. After a totally liquid diet, even a few spoonfuls of cereal can constipate your baby.
- **Use a small, narrow spoon and put a small amount of food in the middle of your baby’s tongue.** His tongue may push the food back out. Be patient. It takes time to learn how to chew and swallow. His first meals will be messy, so use a bib. Start with small amounts.
- **Do not use an infant feeder, syringe or bottle to feed solid foods or diluted cereal.** These can cause choking and overfeeding. They don’t help your baby learn to eat from a spoon.
- **Introduce strained or mashed fruits and vegetables next.** For the first few months, try each food for three or four days before adding a new food. This gives you a chance to see if the new food causes an allergy or upset tummy. Give single foods, such as bananas, before trying mixed foods, like peaches and pears together, for the same reason. Avoid citrus fruits until later.
- **Don’t feed your baby food right from the jar.** Place a small portion (1 to 2 tablespoons) on a plate or bowl. The saliva on the spoon can cause the unused food in the jar to spoil quickly.
- **Even with solid foods, your baby still needs breast milk or formula.** He should drink either breast milk or formula — not cow’s milk — until he’s 1 year old. Cow’s milk can cause allergies if it is given too early.
- **Avoid egg whites, wheat, fish and any other food that someone in the family is allergic to.**
- **For more information,** call your public health or WIC nutritionist or the county extension office (they may have a brochure on Safe Food For Baby -HE508).

Pacifier Use

Babies often suck pacifiers to soothe themselves. For young babies, sucking helps them make contact and learn about the world. In fact, many babies suck their fingers or thumbs before they are born.

Most children stop sucking pacifiers on their own between 2 and 4 years of age. No harm is done to their teeth or jaws. For most children, there is no reason to worry about a sucking habit until the permanent teeth are ready to come in.

If your child does take to a pacifier, be sure to provide one that is safe. When buying a pacifier, keep the following points in mind to be sure it is as safe as possible:

- Never tie a pacifier around your baby's neck or hand.
- Do not put the pacifier in anyone's mouth except for the infant so your child is not exposed to germs.
- Offer the pacifier only when you are sure the baby is not hungry; don't use a pacifier to replace or delay a meal.
- Buy some extra pacifiers.
- Look for a one-piece model that has a soft nipple.
- The shield should be at least 1 1/4 inches across so a baby cannot put the entire pacifier into her mouth.
- Make sure the pacifier is dishwasher safe. Follow the instructions and either boil it or run it through the dishwasher before your baby uses it. Frequently clean the pacifier in the dishwasher or boil the pacifier for babies younger than 6 months; wash with soap and water for older babies.
- Do not use the nipple from a baby bottle as a pacifier.
- Inspect the pacifier every once in a while to see if the rubber has changed color or torn. If so, replace it.

Baby's Physical Activity

One way to have fun together is to have a daily activity time. First, be sure your baby is ready for play. Here are a couple of examples to try.

Pull to Sitting

Lay your baby down on a blanket or rug, and hold both of her hands. Slowly pull her up until she is sitting. Say things like "Up you go!" for encouragement. At first you will probably do all the work, but she will get the idea and may soon work hard to help pull herself up.

Rolling Over

Your baby may now be able to roll enough to shift position and change her view. But she needs your help. Tight clothing, restrictive blankets or crumpled sheets may prevent her from rolling. If she gets frustrated because her shoulders turn but her legs don't follow, gently push on her bottom to help her over.

Purchased Activity Items

You don't need to buy expensive baby gyms or other equipment. The important thing is to spend time together, enjoy the activities, talk and keep eye contact.

Coping With Stress

Does your stomach feel tense? Do you sometimes feel like hitting someone or crying for no reason? These are signs of stress—and you can do something about them.

Everyone is stressed at one time or another. Adding a baby to your family causes changes in your life that may lead to stress.

It's easy to ignore the first signs of stress. Listen to your body and feelings, and take action to reduce stress.

Suggestions

- Put your baby down for a nap. Forget what you are *supposed* to be doing. Take time to *relax*. Do something for yourself that will make you feel fresh again.
- Don't keep worry and anger bottled up. Talk about these feelings with someone close to you.
- Trying to do everything plus taking care of your baby will wear you out. Choose the most important things and don't worry about the others.
- If you are feeling emotionally or physically drained, contact your health-care provider.

Exercises

- Raise your shoulders to your ears. Hold, count to four, then drop your shoulders back to their normal position. Rotate your shoulders back, down and around, first one way, then the other. Repeat a few times.
- Lie on the floor with your feet up on a chair. Place a cool washcloth on your face and think of the most peaceful scene you can imagine. Stay there for at least five minutes.



NORTH DAKOTA
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Help Is Out There

Public Assistance

If you are having trouble making financial ends meet, call your local Community Action Agency or county Social Services office about:

- Medical assistance
- Fuel assistance
- Child-care assistance
- Food stamps
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- JOBS programs
- Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
- And more

For a booklet that lists support organizations, call your county extension office and ask for a free Support Network Directory – HE466.



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